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It's Too Hot Everyone's Got Covid Cheney Loves Kamala It's Normal

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I've had family visiting hence the two week break between pieces and even this is a bit of a filler, some collected thoughts and ramblings just spilling out (I'm working on a meatier science thing which I should have up later this week).

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rom us villages have been
far we've been spared. A
tions for water availability in
h 'false' years where things
next year it's worse than ever,
ll react minimally, afraid to
l apply temporary fixes. I said
ot react. Irrigated fruit tree
But we'd know months in
I said that what we should be
for, is a catastrophic heat
on end, buckle the
cause many thousands to drop
unable to shed heat in
term than the water crisis, but
that both would happen in our lifetime and then I went back to watching US Open tennis highlights on youtube.

And it got me thinking about how we're supposed to live now. About the facade of normality that envelops us in every moment despite the planet collapsing conditions we live within. A facade that all of us to some extent can't help but engage with, whether that's tennis on youtube or netflix or any of the other million little treats that make up the normal of the abnormal, distracting us by necessity. We can't internalize the catastrophe every moment of every day, we have to embrace distractions, but be cynical enough to recognize them as distractions, enjoy them nonetheless, then selectively engage and internalize the catastrophe. If that makes sense.

We're not the first people to live at the end of a world. I've argued before that the world has been ending for a long time, and for some people it ended a long time ago. The world wasn't an Eden then the modern climate crisis came along, or then genocide came along, or then covid came along. These are all products of underlying conditions, of enclosure, capitalism, imperial relations, colonialism, supremacy (human over nature/ other animals, white, other kinds), eugenics, of social structures and psyches of denial, good vibes, middle class comfort.

Or then covid came along.

Half of all Americans will have been covid infected by the end of this summer wave, many for the second, third, fourth, god-knows what numbered time. Assessing waves around the world is a sketchier job, with patchy wastewater tracking, but it appears that in Europe the wave has been smaller than in the US, with outliers, including Scotland, where the wave was huge (and likely reflected the situation in England too, but that failed state long ago scrapped wastewater monitoring).

As this wave winds down, another wave will start. The covid variant tracker Ryan Hisner puts the likely arrival of a breakthrough, new-wave-causing variant around end February. Then maybe half of people will get infected again. Maybe fewer, maybe more, depending on the nature of the variant and the immune profile of a given population. Then we rinse and repeat. Remember when breakthrough infections were rare and if they happened we'd probably only get it once, we'd likely not die, then it would be 2019 again? Remember, we were told this because just a few short years ago it was considered bad to get covid even once. The good old days.

As soon as it became clear that wasn't going to happen, that vaccines were not going to stop transmission, public health bodies, rather than implement a new model for a new situation, shifted all language and messaging on covid to what had been tried and tested for the flu. Which is to say they did nothing apart from tell us to get vaccinated annually and wash our hands (for an airborne virus).

I've been thinking about how once it became clear covid wasn't going to pan out like we had been promised, the application of the mental and practical model used for flu to covid was the ultimate public health disaster move. And it was done not as a reflection of the properties of the two viruses, but solely for back-to-normal reassurance.

"We lived with the flu, we have to live with covid." How many times have you heard this? Maybe even told yourself? It sounds sounds reasonable and logical on its face, doesn't it? But it obscures an ocean of difference. We lived with a legitimately *seasonal* winter virus which possesses lower transmissibility, of which there are *only a few strains, which often were predicted and vaccinated against ahead of time*.

Covid is not seasonal, there are so many strains it's hard to keep up and the same ones, unlike the flu, *don't recirculate.* **They die off and get replaced, so we can't vaccinate ahead of time.** Covid vaccines can only chase strains, they can never get ahead of them. How many people have really sat for a few minutes and thought about why they keep getting infected with the virus that causes covid but never kept getting the flu? Most people don't think about this because it's not their job. They expect to be guided by public health, and they expect public health bodies to be doing The Right Thing. Well that era is dead, if it ever existed. Now more than ever we need to inform ourselves. The world has changed.

Applying the flu model to covid has been the death of public health as an idea. When people say public health has died with covid, they mean it literally for these reasons. Nothing about the science of covid says we should be dealing with it like the flu. From the acute harms to the longer tail of harm it can cause. Institutional governance is dealing with covid like the flu only to avoid disrupting business-as-usual and the interests of capital. To avoid spending money on cleaning the air (totally doable with air filtration and UV light) and to avoid putting 'burdens' on business to do so.

Public health died for capitalism and our health was the price. Always has been really. It just becomes more obvious as conditions deteriorate.

We're also pretending covid is the flu to avoid putting the social mechanisms in place that such a virus requires, mechanisms that promote the idea of a society in which our individual actions form an ecosystem, from which consequences, both good and bad, arise. To avoid the charge of moralizing that comes with telling people they have responsibilities for the health of others. If you get on a plane without covid and get off a plane with covid and give it to someone else and you did nothing to try and stop that happening, that's bad. People should be told that's bad, shouldn't they? Did anyone tell Hillary?

Ultimately covid is one of the events of the 21st century that has further peeled back the curtain on what kind of system (when system means the economy plus the social culture plus institutional governance) we really live in, and the deep, existential trouble we are in due to this system.

A system Kamala Harris or Bernie Sanders or any other American Democrat isn't going to change btw. The latest in this starred and striped clown show, in case you missed it, is the oil company, million-person-killing war criminal Dick Cheney endorsing Kamala Harris, and Bernie saying how great that is for efforts to defend democracy.

Want to vote against genocide? Sorry. You can only vote for a pro-genocide president. Corporate lobbyists spend $4.3bn a year buying Congress and corporations are people now, with more rights. AIPAC brags about spending millions to install pro Israel lawmakers, most Congress people are millionaires and Cheney himself hadn't been elected for over a decade and was parachuted into the VP slot from oil demon Halliburton. I'm going to need an update on the A. democracy part of this and the B. worth defending element.

Oh and Macron in France did the meme, striking a deal with Le Pen's far right bloc to install a right-wing prime minister rather than back a prime minister from the leftist bloc that actually won the election. (The new prime minister is from a party that came 4th with 5% of the vote).

More democracy in action from the good guys!

The good guys we have to vote for to stop the bad guys who the good guys always vote with to stop the left.

Revolution or cooked.

Told you it was a bit of ramble.

Back with more form-fitting nerd science soon.

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Skol 7 hrs ago

You talk of diversions such as the US Tennis Open which have always been thrown to us by capitalists in order to divert our attention from their rancid operations; but now the bread and circus events are actually killing us and repressing us en masse, pandemic superspreader events policed by authoritarian, fascistic security operations. Some people are actually praising competitors for taking part in events whilst COVID positive. The same at the Paris Paralympics watched by disabled people who have had no choice but to segregate ourselves from a society intent on spreading disease -probably the biggest segregation of disabled people from society in decades - most notably due to the ongoing COVID pandemic which capitalists, centrists and their pseudo left apologists have let rip for the sake of profit and the continuation of the putrid capitalist system. Now we see the true fascistic face of all capitalists as regimes around the planet seek to scapegoat and punish disabled people, to continue culling us whilst making millions more people disabled with continued austerity, pandemics, climate breakdown and war. With regard to Harris, Sanders, Cheney et al; Democratic Socialism/Social Democracy was doomed to fail in a capitalist society with an inherently undemocratic ruling class controlling the putatively 'democratic' process. To ensure any kind of democracy or competent governance we must first rid ourselves of the ruling class. The lesson we learn from the 1930s is that rather than supporting the revolutionary aims of Trotsky the pseudo left held back the potential for a huge grassroots movement by suppressing anger and opposition to the ruling class with the same kind of

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the suck of sorrow 8 hrs ago

The Democratic Party apparatus lacks a concept: voters own their votes. I have voted third party for the past 8 Presidential elections. I did so because those candidates were not war

mongers and supported public services like single-payer health care and tuition free state universities.

In my state this year no sane and sentient third parties appear on the ballot. Just the Democrats and the Republicans and two far right-wing parties. There is going to be a lot of blank spaces on my ballot for that is how democracy functions these days. This is ridiculous. In a first past the post election my non-vote does not advance Harris any faster that would my vote for Jill Stein, MD.

That is my take on the state of U.S. democracy. One cannot defend it as it is in flames.

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